

## Minutes

September 7, 2007

N. C. Board of Agriculture

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Maurice K. Berry, Jr.	Roger D. Oxendine
Brent Fleming	Elbert R. Pitt, Jr.
William E. Holliday	Douglas I. Torn
C. Osmond Kearney, Jr.	Jeffery B. Turner
Kirk Mathis	Hyman Young, Jr.

Steve Troxler, Chairman

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## Minutes

September 7, 2007

The September 7, 2007 meeting of the Board of Agriculture was held beginning at 9:05 a.m. at the Hampton Inn, 18 Rockwood Road, Fletcher, North Carolina. Commissioner of Agriculture Steve Troxler called the meeting to order. The following Board members were in attendance: Maurice K. Berry, Jr., William E. Holliday, Kirk Mathis, and Hyman Young, Jr. Elbert R. Pitt, Jr., participated in the meeting via telephone.

Agricultural Programs Administrator Zane Hedgecock opened the meeting with prayer.

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Before proceeding with the agenda items, Commissioner Troxler recognized Larry Wooten and Chester Lowder, with the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation, for comments. Mr. Wooten, who serves as the president of the Farm Bureau, thanked the Department for its continued support of the Farm Bureau and its tireless efforts regarding the current drought situation. General remarks were heard on the impact that the drought is having statewide. Commissioner Troxler thanked the Farm Bureau for providing the first load of emergency hay and for being a sponsor of this year's Mountain State Fair.

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As required by the Ethics Act, Commissioner Troxler reminded Board members of their duty to avoid conflicts of interest.

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Upon MOTION by Mr. Mathis, seconded by Mr. Holliday, the minutes of the July 18, 2007 meeting were approved.

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Commissioner Troxler asked that the record reflect a quorum of Board members for voting purposes.

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The next order of business was the adoption of a Food and Drug Protection Division rule regarding the coloration of unpasteurized milk sold as animal feed. Commissioner Troxler reminded the Board that the rule was discussed in considerable detail at a previous Board meeting.

The MOTION was made by Mr. Holliday to approve the rule as presented. The motion, being seconded by Mr. Mathis, carried by a unanimous vote.

A copy of this rule, cited as 02 NCAC 09E .0116 - Unpasteurized Milk, has been entered into the record as Exhibit A.

Entered into the record as Exhibits B and C, respectively, are two letters from the Dairy and Food Protection Branch of the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The first is from Susan C. Grayson, the head of that branch, and the second from Kay Sigmon, the program manager of the NC Grade "A" Milk Program. These letters indicate support of the proposed rule as presented. Another letter of endorsement has been received from Dr. Jeffrey Engel, the State Epidemiologist and chief of the Epidemiology Section of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. This letter has been entered into the record as Exhibit D.

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Commissioner Troxler recognized the executive director of the North Carolina Small Grain Growers Association, Inc., Dan Weathington, to present a referendum request. The details regarding the referendum are addressed in the Association's letter (addressed to the Board of Agriculture and dated August 13, 2007), a copy of which has been entered into the record as Exhibit E.

The referendum will be held in November and will assess wheat, barley, oats, rye and grain sorghum crops at the rate of one-half of 1 percent. The assessment will be for a six-year period, and funds will be used in research through North Carolina State University. Funds will also be used to seek agribusiness ventures, by "partnering" with NCDA&CS.

Mr. Weathington proceeded to explain that canola will be added to the list for a three-year assessment period and will be assessed at the same rate. Canola is being grown as an alternative plant in several areas of the state, with approximately 500 acres having been planted. General remarks followed.

Mr. Berry made a motion to approve the request of the Small Grain Growers Association. The motion, being seconded by Mr. Young, was voted on and carried.

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The Department's general counsel, Ray Starling, was recognized to give the Board a report on the state's drought situation. Mr. Starling made general remarks and noted that the first task was to work with North Carolina State University in determining the needs within drought-stricken areas. Next came the challenge of acquiring hundreds of thousands of bales of hay, which are needed to survive the upcoming winter months. Just as significant as the lack of available hay from neighboring states was the issue of transportation. Mr. Starling spoke on these issues.

Comments were heard on the use of corn fodder as a substitute feed. The Farm Bureau has carried bales into an area of the state on an experimental basis.

Mr. Starling noted that the Department offers a comprehensive hay alert resource page on its Web site and encouraged farmers to utilize this information. The Web site provides information on advertising needs of farmers (whether they need hay or have hay for sale).

The GOLDEN Leaf Foundation has granted the Department's application for \$500,000, which will basically be used as a rebate program for farmers who have incurred transportation expenses. Mr. Starling explained the details of the program.

Carolina Farm Credit and East Carolina Farm Credit have offered financial assistance in reimbursing farmers for their transportation costs.

Mr. Starling stated NCDA&CS trucks are being used to transport corn fodder to the Waynesville research station. This feed will be sold to farmers, at cost, and will be used on an experimental basis.

Mr. Starling made general remarks on what he referred to as "odds and ends." The Department of Transportation and the Governor's office have been working with NCDA&CS by lifting restrictions which would hinder its efforts in getting this emergency hay to farmers.

Commissioner Troxler made general remarks on assistance from the federal level and the role that the media can play in the disaster relief effort.

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The final order of business was a report on the Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund. Commissioner Troxler went on record thanking the Governor and the General Assembly for their continued interest and support of this program and the \$8 million that will be used to preserve farmland and farmers.

Dewitt Hardee, Environmental Programs Manager, was recognized for comments. Using a slide presentation, Mr. Hardee reported on the demographics surrounding farmland loss. He then gave a brief history of the Trust Fund and spoke on the makeup of its advisory committee.

The \$8 million dollar appropriation will be used to fund public and private enterprise programs that will promote profitable and sustainable farms, to fund farmland conservation agreements, and to support the purchase of agricultural conservation easements. Local county governments and non-profit conservation groups are eligible to apply for funds. Mr. Hardee highlighted key issues regarding the Trust Fund, among these: matching requirements; a farmland protection plan; voluntary agricultural districts; conservation easements; agricultural agreements; programs to promote sustainable agriculture; preservation of the state's number one industry; county-wide economic benefits; quality of life; the ability to buy locally grown products. He also spoke on a proposed timeline for applying for grants, to the selection of projects. Current activities include the rule-making process; finalizing the application process;

public relations and education; staffing and resource development. Mr. Hardee made general remarks regarding each.

A copy of Mr. Hardee's report, detailing his remarks, has been entered into the record as Exhibit F.

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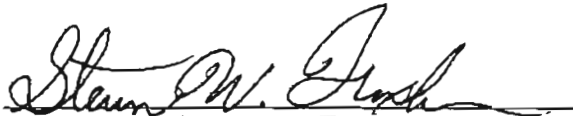
Mr. Holliday made the MOTION, which was seconded by Mr. Mathis, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

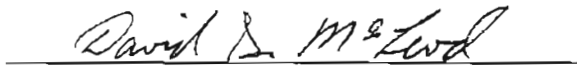
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THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 9:45 A.M.

Recorded & Prepared by:  
Gail S. Rothstein, Court Reporter

Adopted by the Board this 13<sup>th</sup> day  
of February, 2008.

  
Steven W. Troxler  
Commissioner of Agriculture  
Chairman

  
David S. McLeod  
Secretary